S7644 Certain tribes of the Aden Protectorate, in particular the Aulaqis, perform a peculiar greeting ceremony called the *Môqab*. When visitors of importance approach a settlement, word of their coming is sent on ahead, and the men of the settlement turn out to receive them. They parade in a long line on some convenient piece of flat ground in front of their forts, with the leading men and important guests in the centre. On the appearance of the visitors a drum is usually beaten, and shots are exchanged in salute. The Bil Obeid consider it complimentary to shoot as close to the visitors as possible, but most of the tribes have the sense to fire straight up into the air.

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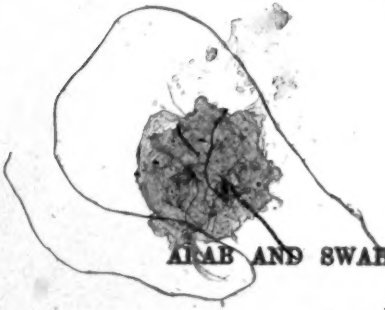

ARAB AND SWAHILI DANCES AND CEREMONIES.

By R. Skene.

The Razha Dance.

535 171 702 562 The Razha was originally a war dance practised by the Arabs in Arabia prior to starting out on a raid. It originated at Manga in Muscat, and is danced with naked swords, the object being to get the muscles of the sword arm into training. The Hatharmut or Hadramaut Arabs also dance it, but use daggers instead of swords.

The dancers, who of course are all men, stand in two rows facing each other, or in one row. They advance slowly a few inches at each step, keeping time to the drumming. The sword is held perpendicularly in the right hand, the fore-arm being at a right angle with the body. While holding the hilt of the sword in a perfect balance between the thumb and the first and second fingers, the base of the hilt is given a smart blow with the wrist so as to make the blade of the sword quiver. Being highly polished and made of fine supple steel, the quivering blade reflects the light in a most effective manner. This can only be done with the long straight double-edged sword of Southern Arabia and not with the scimitar-like blade used further north, owing to the thickness of the latter weapon.

535 534 The music for the Razha dance is supplied by a drum called a *chapuo*, cylindrical in shape, covered with goat skin on both ends. It is about eighteen inches long by eight in diameter, and is played on both ends with the hands, while hung across the waist of the drummer by a cord round the neck. A bass drum is also used, called a *vumi* of the same shape as the *chapuo*, but larger, being two to three feet long and fifteen inches in diameter. It is beaten in the same manner as the *chapuo*.

Anyone who knows how to dance can join in. No refreshments are served.

The Shebwani Dance.

535 562 585 This is danced by the Arabs of Mkelle or Makulla, without any weapons, and by men only, who attend by invitation. It usually takes place at a wedding festival, in which case food and coffee are served round, or at any other general rejoicing. The dancers stand in two lines facing each other about eight or ten paces apart. They bend the knee and bow the body slightly forward to each other in unison and in time to the beating of the drums. They also sing a chorus song and keep time by clapping their hands together.

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The orchestra consists of a *vumi* and a *chapuo* drum, both described above (see Razha dance). A treble drum called a *marwasi* is also used. It is much smaller than the *vumi* and is only about eight inches long by eight inches in diameter. It is covered with goat skin on both ends and is beaten with the flat of the right hand while held in the left by a piece of cord. The drumming is accompanied by cymbals of brass called *vitasa*, which are placed on the ground one above another and struck with pieces of stick, one in each hand, so as to make the cymbals rattle together. In lieu of the cymbals, a metal rod is sometimes used bent into a triangle exactly the same shape as the triangles used in European military bands, and played in the same manner.

The Shebwani is sometimes danced in the afternoon but more often at night. It has no mystical meaning.

THE SHERHA DANCE.

535 585 562

This is danced by the Hatharmut Arabs to celebrate a wedding or for any other cause of rejoicing. The dancers, who are all men, and who attend by invitation, stand round in a large circle some ten paces in diameter and sway the body slightly from side to side, while clapping their hands in time to the music. Presently two men come out of the ring and dance towards each other, and then backwards and forwards in a sort of "chassé croisé" for about ten minutes, and then they retire from the ring and are replaced by two others. Sometimes two couples dance in the ring at the same time.

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The music is supplied by a wind instrument much resembling a clarionet or a French "musette," but the mouthpiece consists of two reeds instead of one, and the tone is very similar to that of the chanter of Scotch bag-pipes. This instrument is called a *zumari*, and supplies the tune accompanied by a *vumi* drum described above (see Razha dance) and by a *msondo* drum standing about four feet high with a diameter of about eighteen inches. It is cylindrical in shape and is covered by a goat-skin at the top end only, the bottom end being open. It is played with both hands in an upright position, resting on the ground.

No refreshments are served at a Sherha dance except if it is held to celebrate a wedding, in which case *pilaw* is served and coffee also.

KINANDA DANCE.

535 562 517

This dance partakes of the nature of a performance for the amusement of the onlookers and is held indoors. Two male performers hold a silk scarf or woollen shawl between them and repeatedly advance towards the audience and retire, while executing various steps and figures. They then face each other and dance in that position, executing with their arms and bodies slow and graceful movements. Then they face the audience and advance and retire and so on till they become tired.

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The musical instruments consist of the small *marwasi* drum described above (see Shebwani dance) and of a *kinanda* which supplies the tune. The latter is a string instrument of the nature of a guitar and is played in much the same way. It usually has seven strings, six of which used formerly to be made of sheep gut, but are now made of twisted silk. The seventh is the bass string and is made of copper wire.

Although not considered altogether reprehensible by austere Mohammedans, the "Kinanda" entertainment is looked upon as rather advanced, if not fast.

Sometimes the dancing is dispensed with and the entertainment is reduced to solo songs accompanied by the *kinanda*. It then assumes a more respectable character, though still not entirely approved of.

Being held indoors, the audience naturally come by invitation only. Refreshments consisting of coffee, sherbet and *halwa* (Turkish Delight) are handed round.

THE ZAMIL DANCE.

This is danced by the Hatharmut Arabs, and generally takes place either by day or by night, in front of the house of some exalted person to whom it is intended to pay compliment or to show respect. It is in fact a sort of serenade, but is also danced at weddings.

The dancers form up in one or more lines facing the house of the person in whose honour it is being held. The leader of the dance starts singing a solo, usually a song of praise to the person in question, and the remainder take up the chorus, which they accompany by rhythmic clapping of hands and swaying of the body. It is not by invitation, and anyone may join in. No drums or musical instruments are used and no refreshments partaken of, except at weddings. This dance has no mystical meaning.

THE CHAŠA DANCE.

This may be called a faction dance owing to the element of competition which enters into it in regard to some other faction which has also organized a dance. It is danced by Swahili men, who dress up in their best clothes and wear Arab daggers and swords borrowed from those of their friends who have them. They do their best to make as fine and as big a show as possible in order to eclipse the dance of the other competing faction. Formerly the dance was accompanied by a feast, and still is in the Lamu District, where the factions vie with each other as to the number of cattle they can afford to kill. In 1912, one faction at the village of Mkunumbi (Witu Sultanate) was known to kill thirty head of cattle to cap the twenty-five head which another faction had killed a few days previously.[1] Needless to say that such waste is impossible in the Malindi District where cattle are scarce, and where the dancers only compete in matters of personal adornment and the number of followers. Faction feeling sometimes runs high, and if two competing dances happen to be taking place on the same night it is not unheard of for one party to attack the other with sticks.

[1] [SEE NOTE ON P. 434 -- ANALYST.]

The dance itself resembles the Arab Razha dance, the men standing in a row and jerking sticks in the same manner that the Arabs jerk their swords, one of which may sometimes be seen in the hand of a Swahili dancer of the Chama.

The orchestra consists of a *vumi* drum, a *chapuo* drum, a pair of cymbals or *vitasa*, a *zumari* or clarionet, all of which are described above (see Razha dance, Shebwani dance and Sherha dance), also a tambourine called a *tari* or *pari*. This is sometimes ornamented with loose brass discs that jingle together, as in the Spanish tambourine. The goat-skin is pegged to the wooden frame and is tightened by stuffing a more or less thick cord between the skin and the frame.

The Chama is usually danced in a public place and no invitation is necessary. Anyone may join in who feels so inclined. No refreshments are served nowadays in the Malindi District at a Chama dance, which has no mystical significance.

THE SHANGWI DANCE.

The dance is identical with the Chama and is danced by the winning faction in the Chama competition, which is judged by the "*wazee wa Ngoma*," or elders of the dance, men who are accustomed to take the lead in dances, in other words "masters of the ceremonies." The winning faction proceed to the house of the organizer of the opposition dance and dance the Shangwi in front of it. He is supposed to take this as a compliment, and passes round a scent bottle and sometimes takes part in the dancing himself. The Shangwi has no mystical significance and is usually danced at night with the same orchestra as for the Chama.

NGOMA YA FIMBO. (Walking-stick dance.)

The Ngoma Ya Fimbo is danced at Swahili wedding feasts, and at Swahili circumcision feasts. The dancers, all men, assemble by invitation and form a ring in the open near the house of the host, all carrying sticks, hence the name of the dance. While those in the ring balance themselves slowly and rhythmically from one foot to the other, two of their number go into the centre and make passes at each other with their sticks as if they were swords, in time to the drumming. After a few minutes of this, another pair go into the centre of the circle and perform in the same manner while the first two retire, and so on to the end of the dance, which usually takes place by day.

Cigarettes and betel nuts are passed round to the dancers. The music is supplied by *vumi* and *chapuo* drums described above (see Razha dance) by *vitasa* or cymbals (see Shebwani dance), and by a *zumari* or clarionet (see Sherha dance). In a temporary pavilion of palm-thatch erected close by, a number of young slave women generally stand holding buffalo horns in their left hands, which they strike with small sticks in time to the drumming.

This dance has no mystic significance and is merely a form of rejoicing.

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THE MWARIBE DANCE.

A dance for women only, which takes place indoors if danced by free women, and out of doors if the dancers are slaves. The women stand in a circle singing songs and clapping their hands in time to a triangle described above (see Shebwani dance). One dancer then advances, executing various fancy steps, towards another dancer in front of whom she stamps her foot and then retires, still executing fancy steps, to her place in the ring. The person in front of whom the first dancer stamped her foot then advances from her place in the ring in the same manner as the first dancer and stamps her foot in front of a third, who comes out in her turn, and so on.

The songs are led by one of the women, who sings the solo while the remainder join in the chorus. No drums are used.

This dance often takes place at wedding festivals when betel-nut and cigarettes are handed round with tea. Then towards the end of the entertainment meat and rice are eaten. It may also be danced on the occasion of other rejoicings, the special time of year for having it being the first week of the North-east monsoon, that is, in November and December.

This Mwaribe dance has no mystic meaning.

THE MWASHA DANCE.

This is also a woman's dance and is of Bajuni origin, its introduction to the Malindi District from Witu having begun about four years ago. If the dancers are free women they dance indoors; if they are slaves the dance takes place in the open, but always by invitation.

The guests line up in two or three rows, one behind the other, and move forward slowly an inch or two at each step, while they jerk their chins forward and move their shoulders in time to the drums. When the front row gets up to the wall of the room, or to the limits of the dancing-floor, all the dancers face about and move slowly as before in the opposite direction, the front row becoming the back one.

If it takes place indoors, no men are allowed to be present except the orchestra, consisting of the performers on a *vumi* described above (see Razha dance) on a tari or tambourine (see Chama dance), and on a *zumari* or clarionet (see Sherha dance).

This dance, which has an undoubted touch of savagery about it, may perhaps be derived from the Somalis, and tends to work the dancers up into a nervous state. It is often danced in competition with another dance faction. No refreshments are served.

It has no mystic significance and appears to be indulged in when the general physical condition of the performers calls for a nervous outlet of some sort.

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THE DANDARO DANCE.

535 567 562 This is rarely if ever danced by free men, and is considered essentially a slaves dance. In a convenient open space, men and women stand in a circle facing inwards, the drums being in the middle. The men stand together, occupying one part of the circle and the women the other. The dancers place the right hand on the left shoulder and the left hand under the right elbow, and in this position they bend the knees slightly and sway the body in time to the music while progressing very slowly sideways round the circle to the right. A *zumari* or clarionet described above (see Sherha dance) plays the tune to which the dancers sing the words of a song, or rather a chorus repeated over and over again at short intervals which are filled by the clarionet solo. The accompanying drums consist of a *vumi* and a *chapuo* (see Razha dance), also a *kurugo* drum, about two feet high and ten inches in diameter, with a goat-skin on one end only which is beaten with a stick, the drum resting on the ground in an upright position.

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The Dandaro may be danced during the daytime as well as at night. Occasionally food may be cooked and partaken of towards the end of the dance. In the larger townships no invitation is necessary, and anybody may join in.

THE KI-NYASA DANCE.

535 171 567 562 As its name indicates, this dance is an importation from Nyasaland, introduced first to Zanzibar and then to the coast of the mainland by slaves captured in Nyasaland and brought here by the Arabs. Consequently it is a dance practised only by slaves and people of humble origin.

It is danced in the open either by day or by night. Men and women, arranged in no special order as to sex, form a circle standing one behind the other and go round in a direction opposite to the hands of a clock, moving in quick time but taking very short steps and bending the knee considerably at each step. The arms are held in the position of a person running, that is to say with the elbow bent and the forearm at right angles to the body, which is bent slightly forward. Some of the dancers jerk their shoulders up and down occasionally. The leader of the dance sings a solo and the others take up the chorus. The men wear a string of small iron bells known as *njuga* strung round their knees, and stamp their foot at each step so as to make them jingle.

535 534 782 One large drum is used, called a *msondo*, and fashioned somewhat after the drum of the Washambala. It is rather a high-toned drum in spite of its size, which is about six feet in length and twelve to fifteen inches in diameter. One end only is covered with goat-skin, struck with the player's hands. The open end of the drum rests on the ground while the drummer stands astride the other end which is supported by a cloth round his waist, and he plays it in that position. This dance has no mystical meaning, and is merely an expression of a superabundance of animal spirits which

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are given vent to by singing and running round in a circle, in time to the beating of a drum, very much in the same manner as children do. No invitations are given, and anyone may join in. No refreshments are handed round.

THE MDEMA DANCE.

This also is an importation from Nyasaland (see Ki-Nyasa dance), and is danced by the slave population only, either by day or by night. It is exactly like the Ki-Nyasa dance described above, with the exception that no iron bells are strapped round the knees, and it is, if possible, of a simpler character, the Ki-Nyasa being in truth simple enough. Like the latter it is merely a vent for high animal spirits. No refreshments are given and no invitations are necessary.

THE KINDIMBA.

The Kindimba is not a dance, but a musical entertainment into which enters a slight element of the mystical. It is only given by people of the slave class in fulfilment of a vow. Any person who greatly desires something or some event to come to pass makes a vow to give a Kindimba if his wish is fulfilled.

Invitations are issued to his friends by the person who is giving the entertainment, and they assemble at his house. The men and women sit together either indoors if there is room, or else in the open. Songs are sung by a leader, the other guests joining in the chorus, and clapping their hands in time to the singing, which is accompanied by a small drum called a *mgumbaro*, very like a *marwasi* (see Shebwani dance), with this difference that only one end is covered with a goat skin, while in the *marwasi* both ends are covered. The other end, which is open, is made to rest on the chest or stomach of the player, who performs upon it in that position with both hands. Hard grains of maize are placed in dry gourds of various sizes, and these are rattled in time to the singing.

The entertainment partakes of the nature of thanksgiving, and frivolous songs are therefore avoided. Although not exactly of a religious character, a certain amount of superstition is far from being foreign to the Kindimba.

THE VUGO.

At a wedding, a procession of women is often formed in the evening after dark to parade the streets, and is called a Vugo. The women sing in chorus to the sound of buffalo horns beaten with short sticks. No men are allowed to take part in the procession, which is both an Arab and a Swahili custom.

THE KINYAGO DANCE.

This is a Swahili medicine-dance usually held outside the town in a plantation on a moonless night. No artificial lights are allowed. Swahilis who have any

[SEE NOTE ON P. 484 -- ANALYST.]

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753 155 535 752 776 causes to the patient, and he is not exacting in his requirements of propitiation. Generally two or three days' dancing will satisfy him together with a large supply of boiled mealie-meal served with grilled fowl or goat. Sometimes as a special treat some *kunde* beans are mixed with the meal. This is given as a farewell dinner to the *pepo* after the dancing is finished. All the guests partake of it as well as the patient.

The dancing begins about 9 a.m., and lasts about an hour and a half. The patient then goes about his work as usual. In the evening the dancers reassemble and dance through the night with the patient. A line is formed, and one dancer at a time advances to where the drums are being played, jerks his shoulders about while bending over one of the drums for a few minutes, then suddenly stamping his foot he retires with a shuffling step back to his place in the line and another dancer goes forward and repeats the performance, and so on. The patient dances with the others, but is distinguished by having a fly-switch in one hand and a live fowl in the other, both of which he waves about.

The patient is dressed in two new dark blue cotton cloths (*kaniki*), worn as a Swahili woman wears her *leso*. No head-dress is worn. On the second day of the dance, if the patient is a woman, she exchanges her two dark blue cloths for a kilt such as the Nyika women wear.

During the dancing, the patient goes occasionally to a pot of cold water in which leaves of wild trees believed to have certain properties have been pounded and mixed up. He puts both hands into the pot and raises some of the liquid to his mouth and drinks. Having quenched his thirst he throws some of the liquid over each shoulder on to his back, and also pours some on his chest as if he were taking a bath.

At the end of the dance on the third day a meal is partaken of as stated above and the *pepo* departs.

The names of *pepo ya ki-nyika* known in Malindi are without number, and are similar to ordinary names at present heard amongst the various Nyika tribes. The songs of praise sung in honour of these *pepo* in Malindi are also numberless.

The same drums are used as in the *pepo ya ki-golla* dance.

PEPO YA KI-PEMBA.

171 776 755 534 As their name indicates, these "*pepo*" are supposed to come from the island of Pemba.

In order to make the *pepo* declare himself, the usual native medicine and Turkish bath are given. The patient is then dressed in two white cloths after the fashion of the *pepo ya ki-golla*. He is placed on a stool, and as soon as the drumming begins he sways his body about in time to it, and ultimately jerks the stool which he sits on round the room. A *zumari* or clarionet (described in the Sherha dance) is also played to the accompaniment of the drums. This jerking about on the stool goes on for seven days, and on the eighth day matting is laid on the floor. The

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patient sits on the matting at one end, and proceeds to jerk himself forward to the other end. On reaching this he jerks backwards without turning round. This is a very laborious business and takes a good deal of effort.

On the eleventh day the patient assumes an upright position, and dances, standing up between two lines of dancers. He advances with short shuffling steps to the line of people in front of him. On getting within a couple of feet of them he begins to retire, shuffling backwards without turning round, and keeping his body bent forwards almost at a right angle with his lower limbs. He is followed by the line of dancers facing him, who dance the same shuffling step, and who keep within a couple of feet of him. On reaching the line of dancers behind him, he straightens his body and starts forward again, the line facing him then retiring and the line behind him following him. He waves a fly-switch in his hand, and a string of small oval iron bells, *njuga*, with pebbles inside, is tied round his right ankle.

No head-dress is worn by the patient, but a paste is made by pounding to a powder a certain scented wood called *udi*, and mixing it with water. This is applied all over the head. If no *udi* wood is available, the wood of the *muhuhu* is used. A black line about half an inch wide is also painted from the tip of the nose over the head to the back of the neck.

On the last day of the dance, fruits and delicacies in very small quantities are laid before the patient, who eats a little of each for the benefit of the *pepo*.

If the *pepo* demands it, and the financial position of the patient will allow of it, a white bull or a male goat is produced on the last day, and is ridden and danced round by the patient as described in the ceremonies which take place to expel a *pepo ya ki-galla*, after which the *pepo* departs from the sick person.

The names of some of the *pepo* known in Malindi are, Mwana Mashungi wa Ukulu, Kekecha wa Mawamba, Makata wa Mapinga, Maungua wa Maamba. A great many propitiatory songs are also known at Malindi.

The same drums are used as in the *pepo ya ki-galla* dance.

PEPO YA KI-HABSHI.

The Abyssinian spirit is not believed to have seized anyone at Malindi yet, and very little is known about it here. It is, however, believed to have possessed people in Zanzibar and Kismayu.

PEPO YA KI-ARABU.

The ceremonies which are gone through to expel a *pepo* of this variety constitute a type which is followed with slight variations in exorcising almost all the *jins* believed to belong to Moslem tribes.

The fundamental difference between the method of treating heathen *pepo* and Moslem *pepo* consists in the substitution of strong perfumes for the Turkish bath method, in order to induce the *pepo* to declare himself.

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171 776 755 635 Instantly he makes a dash back to the dancing ring and prostrates himself on the ground near the drums, probably from exhaustion. But he is not given much time to consider what ails him, for he is closely followed by the *fundi* armed with a *bakora* or cane, who rouses him with a smart cut across the shoulders. The patient jumps up in fear of receiving another blow of the *bakora* and is surprised to find himself quite cured. He returns home to sleep off his fatigue.

Some names of *pepo ya ki-nubi* are Fatuma wa Abdalla, Abdeh wa Hamdeh, Tai wa Yusuf, Saida wa Abana.

There are no *fundis* of *pepo ya ki-nubi* at Kalindi, and it is doubtful if any remain at Takaungu.

PEPO YA KI-SOMALI.

776 535 755 This *pepo* being a Moslem, the preliminary ceremonies are exactly the same as those which take place in connection with the *pepo ya ki-arabu*.

The dancing is also similar to that of the Arab *pepo*, but is much more rapid.

When the sick man is able to get up and dance he puts on Somali clothes instead of Arab clothes. He also flourishes two small flags with sacred words on them. If he rides a bull on the last day of the dance, he flourishes a spear instead of a sword as the Arab *pepo* does.

[534] The drums used are the *tari* (described in the Chama dance), and they are beaten in very quick time.

The names of the Somali *pepo* are the same as modern names common to Somalis.

The same drums are used as in the *pepo ya ki-arabu* dance.

PEPO NG'OMBE.

776 755 This *pepo* is said to make the unfortunate person who gets it low like a cow. It is considered a dangerous *pepo*, and many people do not get rid of it without paralysis of some of their limbs or of one whole side of the body.

The procedure followed to make the *pepo* speak is the same as that in cases of *pepo ya ki-galla*, that is to say the Turkish bath.

The *pepo ng'ombe* speaks Swahili, but in a hesitating manner, and interlarded with bovine noises. Grass must be cut and brought in to him to eat. If no grass is given he will try to get out of the house to go and graze. Water must be given to him to drink in a bucket or other large receptacle, into which he puts his face and drinks like a cow. Some of the water must be thrown over the body of the patient, for, if this is not done, rigidity of the limbs is believed to set in.

If the patient's mouth begins to twist to one side, the case is considered to have entered a very serious phase, and another Turkish bath is given. The patient is rubbed with castor oil, but no other sort of grease must be brought near him, nor any kind of perfume or scent.